REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding final Office Action mailed October 11, 2006. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and pending claims are respectfully requested.

I.   Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

As has been acknowledged by the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office ("USPTO") has the burden under section 103 to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness by showing some objective teaching in the prior art or generally available knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art that would lead that individual to the claimed invention. *See In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 1074, 5 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1596, 1598 (Fed. Cir. 1988). The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP) section 2143 discusses the requirements of a *prima facie* case for obviousness. That section provides as follows:

> To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, not in applicant's disclosure.

In the present case, the prior art does not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations, and there is no suggestion or motivation in the prior art to modify the references to include those limitations.

A. Rejection of Claims 1, 5, 7, 16, 18, 22-28, 31, 32, and 35-39

Claims 1, 5, 7, 16, 18, 22-28, 31, 32, and 35-39 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Rowland, et al.* ("Rowland," U.S. Pat. No. 5,848,412) in view of *Hind, et al.* ("Hind," U.S. Pat No. 6,941,459) in view of the book by *Stallings* ("Network and Internetwork Security"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

1. The Rowland Disclosure

Rowland discloses a method and apparatus for providing user identification and transaction information to web sites. *Rowland*, column 1, lines 3-6.

In Rowland's disclosed method, a user first attempts to access a web site. *Rowland*, column 6, lines 8-11. In response, the web site returns to the user's computer the site name and a request for user information. *Rowland*, column 6, lines 12-15. An applet on the user's computer then determines whether an entry exists for the website name. *Rowland*, column 6, lines 18-22. If no entry exists, the applet requests of and receives from the user a limit level reflecting the level of information that is to be provided to the web site. *Rowland*, column 6, lines 22-35. After the limit level is received, or if an entry already exists, the applet responds to the web site with information fields that

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pertain to the limit level associated with the particular web site. *Rowland*, column 6, lines 52-55.

From the above, it can be appreciated that Rowland describes a system and method in which two entities communicate with each other: a user computer and a web site computer. Rowland does not speak of any other entities being used.

2. The Hind Disclosure

Hind discloses a method and system for selectively encrypting elements of a document. *Hind*, Abstract. Given that Applicant's claims are not directed to encryption systems or methods the relevance of the Hind reference is questionable.

3. The Stallings Disclosure

Pages 135-136, which were relied upon by the Examiner, describe encryption methods. Given that Applicant's claims are not directed to encryption systems or methods the relevance of the Stallings reference is questionable.

4. Applicant's Claims

Applicant claims systems and method for sharing user information. For example, independent claim 1 provides as follows:

> 1. A method for sharing user information, the method comprising:
> receiving with a network service an identification of a level of access to user information that is to be extended to a web site host, the identification being received from a user computer via a network;

assigning with the network service a user code that is pertinent to the identified level of access;

sending the assigned user code from the network service to the user computer via a network to enable the user to provide the user code to the web site host when the user visits a web site maintained by the web site host;

receiving from the web site host via a network with the network service a request for information concerning the user and the user code that was provided to the web site host;

determining with the network service a level of access for which the web site host is authorized from the user code received from the web site host; and

transmitting from the network service to the web site host via a network user information that pertains to the user code.

In the Office Action, the Examiner appears to argue that Rowland teaches each of the various actions of claim 1, except for "sending the assigned user code from the network service to the user computer via a network to enable the user to provide the user code to the web site host when the user visits a web site maintained by the web site host". Applicant disagrees that Rowland teaches those other actions.

First, Rowland does not teach or suggest "receiving with a network service an identification of a level of access to user information that is to be extended to a web site host, the identification being received from a user computer via a network". Applicant notes that the Examiner does not even address that limitation, but instead states that Rowland teaches "receiving from a user an identification of a level of access that is to be extended to a web site host". As described above, the "receiving" in Rowland's system is performed by the web site host. In other words, as also described above,

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Rowland does not teach or suggest a "network service" (separate from the claimed "web site host") that receives any identification from a user as to what information to share with a web site host.

Second, Rowland does not teach or suggest "assigning with the network service a user code that is pertinent to the identified level of access". Again, Roland does not disclose a "network service" that is used to facilitate information sharing as in Applicant's system. It logically follows then that Rolland fails to disclose such a network service "assigning" a "user code". Furthermore, Applicant notes that Figure 6 of the Rolland reference, which was relied upon in the Office Action, does not teach or suggest the action of a "network service" "assigning a user code" that is pertinent to a level of access. Instead, Figure 6 is a simple table that associates web sites with access levels. No "codes" are identified and nothing in the figure indicates anything about "assigning" such a code.

Third, Rowland does not teach or suggest "receiving from the web site host via a network with the network service a request for information concerning the user and the user code that was provided to the web site host". Specifically, Rowland does not contemplate a web site providing a "user code" to the above-mentioned "network service". Again, Rowland fails to disclose any such network service. Furthermore, column 6, lines 24-32 of the Rowland reference, which is relied upon in the Office Action, only describes the web site sending the "web site name" and a "request for information". *See Rowland*, column 6, lines 26-29.

Third, Rowland does not teach or suggest "determining with the network service a level of access for which the web site host is authorized from the user code received

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from the web site host". Regarding that limitation, Rowland fails to contemplate a "network service" or a "user code" that is "received from" a web site host for reasons described above.

Fourth, Rowland does not teach or suggest "transmitting from the network service to the web site host via a network user information that pertains to the user code". Once again, Applicant reiterates that Rowland does not disclose a "network service" as claimed by Applicant. Therefore, Rowland does not disclose such a network service that transmits user information to the web site host. Instead, such information is provided by the user computer in the Rowland system.

In view of the above, and further in view of the fact that the other cited references do not remedy the deficiencies of the Rowland reference, Applicant submits that the rejection of claim 1 and its dependents should be withdrawn.

With further regard to claim 1, the Office Action acknowledges that Rowland does not teach or suggest "sending the assigned user code from the network service to the user computer via a network to enable the user to provide the user code to the web site host when the user visits a web site maintained by the web site host". For that limitation, the Office Action relies upon the Hind reference. Regarding column 28 of the Hind that was relied upon in the Office Action, Applicant notes that Hind's teachings on encryption methods have nothing to do with the personal information exchange described by Rowland or claimed by Applicant. As such, Applicant submits that there is no legitimate motivation to modify Rowland's system with the teachings of the Hind reference.

Regarding Applicant's other claims, Applicant notes that the rejection is insufficient as to Applicant's other claims for similar reasons to those described above. For example, regarding independent claim 16, Rowland and the other references do not teach or suggest "means for assigning a user code that is pertinent to a level of access selected by a user that is to be extended to a web site host", "means for receiving from the web site host via a network the user code provided to the web site host by the user computer", "means for determining a level of access for which the web site host is authorized from the user code received from the web site host", or "means for transmitting from the network service to the web site host via a network user information that pertains to the user code. Applicant notes that Rowland and the other references are similarly deficient as to Applicant's other independent claims. Applicant therefore submits that each of claims 1, 5, 7, 16, 18, 22-28, 31, 32, and 35-39 is allowable over the cited references.

B.   Rejection of Claim 4

Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Rowland* in view of *Hind* and *Stallings* as applied to claim 1, and further in view of *Schneier*. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As is identified above, the Rowland/Hind/Stallings combination does not teach or suggest several aspects of Applicant's claims. In that Schneier does not remedy the deficiencies of the Rowland/Hind/Stallings combination, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is allowable over the Rowland/Hind/Stallings/Schneier combination for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable over Rowland/Hind/Stallings.

C. Rejection of Claim 6

Claim 6 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Rowland* in view of *Hind* and *Stallings* as applied to claim 1, and further in view of *Henrick, et al.* ("Henrick," U.S. Pat. No. 6,055,510). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As is identified above, the Rowland/Hind/Stallings combination does not teach or suggest several aspects of Applicant's claims. In that Henrick does not remedy the deficiencies of the Rowland/Hind/Stallings combination, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 6 is allowable over the Rowland/Hind/Stallings/Henrick combination for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable over Rowland/Hind/Stallings.

D. Rejection of Claims 29, 30, 33, and 34

Claims 29, 30, 33, and 34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Rowland* in view of *Hind* and *Stallings* as in claims 1, 16, 27, and 31 and further in view of *Davis, et al.* ("Davis," U.S. Pat. No. 6,367,009). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.
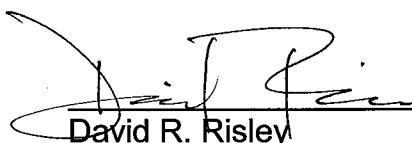
As is identified above, the Rowland/Hind/Stallings combination does not teach or suggest several aspects of Applicant's claims. In that Henrick does not remedy the deficiencies of the Rowland/Hind/Stallings combination, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 29, 30, 33, and 34 are allowable over the Rowland/Hind/Stallings/Henrick combination for at least the same reasons that claims 27 and 31 are allowable over Rowland/Hind/Stallings.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,

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